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Jerry D.—And who does Andy Walker think it is that writes the LAYMAN? Does he believe it is one of them degraded priests that's been disgraced by their bishop, and put away out of the holy Catholic Church for their bad conduct, as Father O'Donovan told the boys when he bid them give up the papers to himself?

Terence O'S.—Well, then, Jerry, I'm thinking that Father O'Donovan knew very well that that was a lie, for didn't I see him a readin' on it himself, on the sly, more than wost, and do ye think he'd be doing that if he thought it was wrote by a man that's a disgrace to the Church and the clergy?

Jerry D.—And who does Andy Walker allow writes it?

Terence O'S.—Why, Andy says he knows very well that it's no less than the Protestant bishop in Stephen's-green as writes every word of it from end to end; and Andy says he's a mighty larned and cute man, who comed over from Oxford to teach the parsons how to argue logic, and that he only purtends to be a layman, the better to get Catholics to attend to what he has to say for himself and his religion.

Jerry D.—By dad, and if that's true, anyhow, sure it's only the greater shame for the true Archbishop that's in Dublin, Archbishop Cullen, that writes such beautiful pastoral letters about St. Patrick and the rascally proselyters, not to expose him for telling so many lies, as the priests says in the paper. Sure that's the very man it would do every true Catholic's heart good to see shown up as a liar and an impostor, instead of slinking away, and purtending that the LAYMAN, whoever writes it, is a paper not worth noticing.

Terence O'S.—Well, indeed, then, Jerry, I don't believe one word that the reason the CATHOLIC LAYMAN is not exposed by Archbishop Cullen and the priests is because they don't think it worth while; for, sure enough, there is such a powerful lot of them papers a-going in the country, in spite of all the priests and bishops can do or say to the contrary, that there never was anything that done either so much harm or so much good as it is every day doing, just according to whether it tells truth or lies; and the worst of it is, that no one that reads it but learns more than ever he knew before of his religion as well as of what is to be said on both sides; and, for my part, I never read a line of it but I can't help for the life of me thinking that it's mighty like truth, and that if any of it is lies after all, it's mighty hard to make out what is true and what is lies. And I tell you what, Jerry, I do believe in my heart that it's the priests that's telling the lies and not the writers in the LAYMAN, which is just the civillest and best-spoken newspaper that ever I came across, whether it's written by a layman or a Protestant bishop, or whomsoever is the writer of it.

J. Driscoll.—You're not far out there, any how, I'm thinking, Terry; and as we have come to spake so freely together, I'll just say what has often come into my head as to what could make a Protestant bishop spend his money in sending about the paper to the likes of you or me, or Andy Walker either, and takin' such a deal of trouble in writin' of it, month after month, for more nor five years right on end, unless he really wished to do us good and was sure his religion was the true one. What good would it do the Protestant bishops or parsons if all Ireland was Protestant to-morrow? though no one can believe that they expect to get half the Catholics over while there's so many things to prevent them changing, if they were ever so sure that the Protestants is right. Sure the bishops and parsons wouldn't be a bit richer or better off than they are already, and they'd have a dale more trouble with the people than they have now. Andy Walker says he wost heard a parson who was very comfortable, and had next to nothing to do in his parish for want of people to go to the church, say he'd be right sorry the people gave up the chapel and came over to his way, as he'd have nothing but trouble and heart-scalding, and begging at him from week's end to week's end, and he'd have neither rest nor peace if he didn't keep two or three curates to do the work for him.

Terence O'S.—True for him, Jerry; and I'm sure there's a dale of parsons in the same way of thinking, and that's the reason maybe that some of them fights so shy of the LAYMAN themselves. It's different, to be sure, in our Church, because, you see, every family as goes over to the parson is a great loss, be them never so poor, to the parish priest, who gets paid by the people voluntary, and who would get nothing if they went away; and sure isn't that the reason that Father O'Donovan and the rest of the priests is ever and always agin any of the boys going to America, because they'd lose their dues, and no mistake, by their going away, however rich the boys themselves or their friends may get by going there.

J. Driscoll.—Well, then, Terry, my mind is, that the best chance we have of getting at God's truth is just to do what the CATHOLIC LAYMAN advises us—to buy a Douay Bible and read it quietly to ourselves, and just see and make out whether God has said in it that there's purgatory as well as hell, and whether He says in it that the priests can get us or our friends out of purgatory, no matter what we pay for it; and whether it is written in it that every Christian ought to confess everything he thinks and does to the priest; and if I can't find purgatory, or prayers to the Blessed Virgin in the Bible, I'll make bold just to think that the LAYMAN is in the right, and not telling lies

after all, whatever Father O'Donovan or any one else may say to the contrary; and I'll be glad if you would buy a Bible or a Testament yourself, Terry, and then we'd be able to help one another in searching it out; for I'll never be aisy, now my mind is up about it, till I get to the bottom of it—whether it's the priest or whether it's the CATHOLIC LAYMAN that's telling the lies!

Correspondence.

"EGO ABSOLVO TE."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR,—I beg leave to make a few observations in answer to the article on confession, headed "Ego absolvo te," which appeared in your periodical of last month. The following are a few extracts from said article, viz.:

"In our last number we gave the forms of absolution used in the Greek Church for twelve hundred years and more from the time of Christ. We showed that all those forms consisted in praying to God for the pardon of sin, as that which He alone could give."

You then quote forms of prayer from the sacramentary of Pope Gelasius, and continue:—"In these prayers the priest does not attempt to say 'I absolve thee'; he only prays to God that God Himself will remit the sins of the penitent, as if that were a work which God alone could do, and which priests could only pray for."

And again you say, "Here"—at the reconciliation of a penitent at death—"at least, we should expect that the highest power of the priest in forgiving sins should be exercised. Yet here, as well as everywhere else, the priest's office is executed only in prayer to God, that He will pardon sin; but without any trace of the words 'I absolve thee.'"

And you finally wind up with, "Those awful words for man to speak in respect of sin against God, 'I absolve thee,' were never spoken by man on earth." C. L., August, 1857.

Now, in sober earnestness, I ask you, as the champion of the Church of England in Ireland, how can you reconcile these statements and assertions with the doctrine and practice of your Church on this question? Do not the priests, or rather ministers, of the Established Church, sir, unequivocally claim and exercise the power of forgiving mortal man his sins against God and his neighbour, as is evident to any man of common sense who reads the authorised prayer-book? To prove my assertion, I proceed to give a quotation or two from this book, as follows, viz.:

"And because it is requisite that no man should come to the holy communion but with a full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience; therefore, if there be any of you who, by this means, cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's word, and open his grief (that means, Catholic readers, make his confession), that by the ministry of God's holy word he may receive the benefit of ABSOLUTION, together with ghostly counsel and advice," &c.—(Minister's exhortation.)

Another quotation—"Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special confession (take a note of that, Roman Catholics) of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter; after which confession, the priest shall absolve him after this sort—Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences; and by His authority committed to me, I absolve thee (aye, aye) from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."—(Order for the visitation of the sick.)

Now, Mr. Editor, I humbly venture to think that there is something more in this than praying to God to forgive the sins of the penitent; and if our priests are wrong, if it is awful, frightful, as you say, for them to repeat, "I absolve thee," it must be equally so for your ministers. A Protestant, especially an educated one, should be the last person in the world to denounce the holy scripture institution of confession; for this reason, that it is the doctrine of his own Church, and which she has held, with jealous care, since her first foundation in the sixteenth century. In the last quotation given above from the Book of Common Prayer your minister does not say to the penitent, may Almighty God forgive thee thy sins: no, but he says, I, I absolve thee from all thy sins; which are the very words our priests say. Confession, then, is the doctrine of the Protestant Church, and I defy you to deny it if you admit the prayer-book. I will resume this subject in my next letter.

I am, &c., &c.,

WILLIAM ROURKE.

[We have also received a letter from "A True Protestant," which we do not think it necessary to publish, as the question is so fully raised by Mr. Rourke.]

In writing our articles on "Ego absolvo te" we were not ignorant of the fact to which our attention is now called; but as honest inquirers after truth we investigated the antiquity of the form, regardless of the effect of our search on this Church or on that. We are not of those who shun finding truth for fear of its effects.

We are ready to consider how the two Churches are affected by the fact we have proved—taking for our guide this principle, that the doctrines of a Church are essential; its forms non-essential.

We will first observe on the respective positions of Mr. Rourke and ourselves as inquirers after truth.

Mr. Rourke appears to have thought that the fact that the words "Ego absolvo te" are found in the prayer-book of the Church of England and Ireland should have stopped our mouths, and prevented our telling plain and undeniable truths about those words.

We might have hoped that our Roman Catholic readers would have known us better by this time. We might have hoped that our uniform profession, supported by our uniform conduct, would have led to the conviction that in matters which concern the truth of religion, the salvation of souls, and the pardon of sin, we will speak truth and proclaim facts.

It is a clear and certain fact, which Mr. Rourke does not attempt to deny, that the words "Ego absolvo te" were never used in the Church of Christ for 1200 years. Why should we not proclaim such a fact as this? Is it because the words are found in our prayer-book? That does not make the fact less certain, nor does it involve any obligation on us to conceal it.

Mr. Rourke is taught by his Church that he must not speak what he believes to be true if she disapproves of it—that he must profess what he does not believe to be true if she requires it. But our Church does not seek to impose any such obligation upon us.

We do not impute a slavish spirit of subjection to Mr. Rourke or to individual Roman Catholics. We know that many Roman Catholics have spoken historical truth boldly, even when at variance with the practice of their Church. We trust yet to see Mr. Rourke do the same. We invite him now to declare that as a matter of historical truth it is clearly proved that the words "Ego absolvo te" were never used in the Church of Rome itself for 1200 years. The fact he cannot deny: why should he not frankly acknowledge it? Let him learn to speak truth as we do, and then we will count him a worthy antagonist, and hope to elicit truth in discussion with him.

But while we acknowledge that many individual Roman Catholics have taken this noble course of speaking truth, we know that there is nothing the Church of Rome so much desires to repress as the speaking or acknowledging of such truths by her members—a sad course for a professing Christian Church to be engaged in, and one which testifies heavily against her.

Mr. Rourke must now feel that *this is true*. He must feel that it is impossible to deny the fact we have stated, that the words "Ego absolvo te" were never used in his Church for 1200 years, and that the words are, therefore, a modern invention of man. And Mr. Rourke must also feel that if he were now to acknowledge this undeniable truth, his candid regard for truth would be regarded with feelings of indignant rage by his priests, his bishops, and his Church.

We make the greatest allowance and feel the greatest sympathy for Mr. Rourke, in his difficult position. God grant and enable him and us to speak truth boldly. We feel for him all the more because our position is free from his difficulties. Our Church has taught us to speak the truth and fear not. We follow her teaching in so doing. In proclaiming the fact that the words "Ego absolvo te" were never used in the Church of Christ for 1200 years, we are performing, and not violating, the duty which our Church enjoins on us.

With respect to the form of absolution in the service for the visitation of the sick, we must distinguish between the doctrine of a Church, and the form of words in which it may be expressed. We believe that the doctrine of the Church of England is sound: we think that in this instance she has retained words ill suited to express it, and liable to be greatly misunderstood. We think that a form of words invented for the first time in the thirteenth century is unsuited to a Church reformed on the primitive model. We, therefore, think that it would have been wiser in our Reformers to have omitted or altered these words. But we find some excuse for them in the fact that the ancient forms, by which we have proved the novelty of the form, had not then been published.

But moral guilt or innocence does not consist in the form of words we use, but in our meaning. Notwithstanding that the prayer-book does contain the words "I absolve thee," still the doctrine of the Church of England and Ireland and the doctrine of the Church of Rome, about the priest's power of forgiving sin, are essentially opposed.

The Church of Rome teaches that it is impossible to be saved unless we get a priest to say over us, "Ego absolvo te;" or, if it be impossible to get the priest, it is, at least, necessary to wish for him.

The Church of England teaches that any sinner who repents and flees to Christ for refuge may immediately obtain the pardon of all his sins from Christ alone, without any other priest, and that the words of the minister are not in any sense necessary to the pardon of sin.

The Book of Common Prayer contains two other forms of absolution, intended for general and constant use—

viz., the absolution in the Morning Prayer—viz.: "Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness and live; and hath given power and commandment to His ministers to declare and pronounce to His people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins; *He pardoneth and absolveth* all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel." The other form is in the communion service, viz.: "*Almighty God*, our heavenly Father, who of His great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto Him have mercy upon you; *pardon and deliver you from all your sins*; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

These three forms must be considered together, in order to understand what power the prayer-book attributes to the minister. On comparing them, it is evident that the words "I absolve thee," in the service for the visitation of the sick, must be intended in a sense quite different from the sense in which the Church of Rome uses those words.

We turn now to Mr. Rourke to help us to explain the difference. Mr. Rourke says—"In the last quotation given above from the Book of Common Prayer, your minister does not say to the penitent, *may Almighty God forgive thee thy sins*." Now, we always wish to be courteous, but still we must speak necessary truth as courteously as we can, and we ask Mr. Rourke to take it so. We really must meet this statement of Mr. Rourke with a direct contradiction. In that very quotation which Mr. Rourke gives in his letter, the minister does say what Mr. Rourke says he does not say. If Mr. Rourke will use his own eyes in looking at his own quotation in his own letter above given, he will read this—"Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences." It is not until after he has said this that he goes on to say—"And by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee," &c. In which it is apparent that the minister's authority, whatever it be, is held to be subordinate to the trust and hope that Christ, in answer to prayer, has first forgiven; but the priests of the Church of Rome do not say first, "Our Lord Jesus Christ of His great mercy forgive thee." No; that would spoil their object: they go at once to "I absolve thee." That alone is essential, important, desirable, with them.

It is evident, therefore, that our Reformers, in retaining these words in one particular case, could not have intended more than to use the words in that sense which would alone be consistent with their other forms, and which is moreover the construction which was actually put upon this form at its first introduction.

What that construction was we take from John de Athon, one of the most learned of English canonists, who wrote in the reign of Edward I., about the year 1290, not very long, perhaps, after the introduction of "Ego absolvo te" into England; who gives this comment, "I absolve thee; that is to say, I declare thee, being penitent, absolved."—Constit. Othobon., p. 82.

But the best authority on the prayer-book has said that the meaning of the form as it stands in the prayer-book is still more limited; "the form of absolution, of which we are now discoursing, is only designed to remit to the penitent the censures that might be due from the Church to his sins" (Wheatley on the Book of Common Prayer, c. xi., p. 456). This is a case in which the ministers of the Church have authority to say, "I forgive thee." Thus, when a member of the Church of Corinth had grievously and openly offended, St. Paul gave them this command, "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person"—(1. Cor. v. 13.); and when the man repented, St. Paul wrote, "To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also; for if I forgive anything, to whom I forgive it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ"—(2 Cor. ii. 10).

We think it right that the ministers of the Church in attending the sick should have power to absolve from such punishment as the Church has power to impose. This power was always given in the primitive Church. We wish the form were so altered as to make this plain; that is the only alteration we wish to see in our prayer-book.

We have another difference to point out, important to those who object to have these words addressed to them. The Church of Rome requires all her members to seek salvation through the words, "Ego absolvo te," spoken by a priest, and denies salvation (so far as she can) to those who refuse that absolution; but the Church of England requires no one to receive it. Therefore, those who scruple at having these words addressed to them may consistently continue to be members of the Church of England, but they cannot continue to be members of the Church of Rome.

Having disposed of a form of words, we now come to the substance of the thing. We do this upon Mr. Rourke's other quotation. He quotes the following passage from the exhortation in the communion service:—"And because it is requisite that no man should come to the holy communion but with a full trust in God's mercy and with a quiet conscience; therefore, if there be any

of you who, by this means, cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's word, and open his grief, that by the ministry of God's holy word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice," &c. Now, if Mr. Rourke thought to embarrass us by this quotation, we must tell him that he is widely mistaken. We believe, without doubting, that it is the ordinary method of God's dealing in His Church, to give His people comfort, and peace, and absolution, and the assurance of pardon, through the ministry of His holy word by His ministers; and we think that God's ministers do rightly execute their commission in inviting those who are troubled in mind to come to them for this ministry. St. Paul thus described his ministry: God "hath given unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."—(2 Cor. v. 18, 19, 20).

That "ministry of reconciliation" we believe does still continue in the Church of God.

St. Peter, too, has taught us how this ministry should be exercised, when he said to Simon Magus, "Repent, therefore, of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."—Acts viii. 22.

This, and this only, is the ministry intended or permitted in the exhortation in the communion service. We request Mr. Rourke to mark, that it is not lawful in the Church of England and Ireland for the ministers to use the words "I absolve thee" to those whom he has thus invited, but only that form of absolution which is in the communion service, and which we have given above.

Maintaining as we do that the Church of Rome is not infallible, but rather involved in many errors, and believing as we do that the Church of England and Ireland holds the truth, we can afford to admit that she has in one instance retained words not the best suited to express her doctrine.

We beg now to ask Mr. Rourke whether he thinks that we have succeeded in proving that the words "I absolve thee" were never used in the Church of Rome herself for twelve hundred years.

THE UNWILLING LISTENER—A PRIEST DEAF AND DUMB.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR,—Travelling lately in this country on a deputation for the Bible Society, I met with a strange proof of the unwillingness of the priests to enter into controversy, even when the inducements to do so were of the strongest kind. I was seated on the outside of a coach, a priest occupying the box seat, his breviary by his side; behind him were three persons, one of them a Protestant, I rather think; the second a Roman Catholic, intelligent, and good humoured; the third myself.

After a little skirmishing on my part to draw on the subject of controversy, the Roman Catholic beside me opened a discussion of his own accord, by saying that it was a strange thing there should be so many differences amongst those who read the Bible, various and contradictory interpretations, sects and schisms, &c. I answered that it was undoubtedly a great evil, but that we should charge it not on God's Word, or on the humble and prayerful study of it, but on the wicked heart of man, who twisted and perverted its meaning to serve his own base purposes, and then turning a favourite text of the Roman Catholics against themselves, I added, the Bible itself declares this, for it says that the unlearned and unstable wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction; and this, I said, is a reason, not for keeping the Bible from the people, which is impossible, for get it they will, in some way or other; but it is a reason why the people should be instructed and enlightened, that they may not wrest it to their own destruction. All this time the priest said not a word. My opponent (a friendly and good-tempered one, I must say), finding I was prepared to meet him on this ground, changed his plan of attack. I suppose, said he, you will admit this age to be a highly enlightened and civilised one? is it not, then, strange that in the midst of all this knowledge and freedom men should be split up into so many sects and churches, when, for the first 1500 years after Christ, all were agreed to hold the same faith? Without entering on a wide field of ecclesiastical history, and telling him of the countless divisions, heresies, &c., that rent the Church of Rome herself during these boasted ages of faith and unity, I took up a simple line of defence. After making a few remarks on the Church of the Waldenses, who never were in communion with Rome, I said, two pastors of this Church lately visited Dublin, and at a meeting where they were present, the Archbishop of Dublin, who was in the chair, stated the great interest he felt in the Waldenses, from the fact that they had never, properly speaking, reformed—never assumed the name of Protestant; but dwelt in their native valleys, holding all through the same faith and doctrines. Here, then, I said, is an instance of some who did not submit to the Church of Rome,

even during the first 1500 years of which you speak. He could not deny this, but objected that those who held out against her were very few. Yes, I answered, but the Bible tells us that the Lord's flock is a little one, and that in every age those who profess a pure faith and are indeed His people are few and scattered. Finding this ground also untenable, and doubtless annoyed that the priest of his own Church in the front did not take up the cause, as a last resort he launched into a tirade of indiscriminate abuse on the missionary work in Ireland, charging those engaged in it with distributing bribes, soup tickets, &c., and that when everything else failed the poor people were persecuted. This was too much for my gravity, and, laughing outright, I asked him whether he had read the account of the Coombe riots and of the treatment Mr. Halahan had received; for if he had he would see where the charge of persecution really lay. The foregoing conversation and much to the same effect passed within earshot of a priest, who never once opened his lips during the entire time. I leave you, Mr. Editor, and your readers to form your own opinion about this strange circumstance; but I only ask, what would be thought of one of us if we were to allow a layman in our presence to defend our Church against a Romish priest, and never once render him the slightest assistance?

I remain, sir, yours, very truly,

M. A.

CAN A ROMAN CATHOLIC PRODUCE HIS RULE OF FAITH?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

MR. EDITOR.—When next the Reader met Andy, he says to him, "It's my turn now to attack the Roman Catholic Rule of Faith." "When I'm done," says Andy, "then you may." "But," says the Reader, "I'm afraid I'd have a long wait if I waited until then; for it seems as if you'll never be done." "Troth," says Jerry, "it's like the bargain the old master made with my grandfather long ago. 'Tim,' says he, 'I'm going to make you my own body servant, and you'll have the height of good wages, and eating and drinking galore; but it's on condition that you keep yourself sober; for,' says he, 'you'll have to bring me home every night after dinner, and 'twouldn't be decent for us both to be drunk together.' 'But, your honour,' say my grandfather, 'won't I get a turn at all?' 'I'll make a bargain with you,' says the master; 'you may take your turn every night that I'm sober.' So they went on very well for a while; but at last my grandfather came to him, and says he, 'I must be leaving your honour.' 'What fault do you find?' says the master. 'Isnt your wages pleasing to you?' 'It is,' says he. 'Have you any complaint to make about your living?' 'No,' says he, 'for we're fed like fighting cocks; but it's in regard of the bargain your honour made with me.' 'And wasn't it a fair bargain?' says the master. 'Faix it was,' says he; 'paring that your honour isn't ere a night sober, so that my turn never comes at all.' 'I'm afraid,' says the Reader, 'that would be the way with me if I had to wait until Andy finished, for it's himself that has the gift of the gab.' 'Well,' says the boys, 'let the Reader have a turn now. Fair play, and old Ireland for ever.' 'Well,' says he, 'tell me before I begin, isn't the point of dispute between us, which the Protestant or Roman Catholic Rule of Faith is best?' 'That's the very point,' says Andy. 'Well,' says the Reader, 'don't you think 'twould be a good way to produce the two rules, and let us examine them both together?' 'That's fair enough,' says the boys. [But I must tell your honour, as a secret, that Andy looked very down in the mouth when he heard it.] 'Now, boys,' says the Reader, 'here's my rule at all events; and with that he put down his BIBLE upon the table, and says he, 'Now put down the Roman Catholic Rule alongside it.' 'Sure,' says Andy, 'I proved that your rule is a bad and dangerous one.' 'Bad or good,' says the Reader, 'there it is; but *where's yours*?' 'Sure,' says Andy, 'I proved that *your* rule was so obscure that no one could understand it.' 'Obscure or not,' says the Reader, 'there it lies; but *where's yours*?' 'But,' says Andy, 'your rule doesn't contain all that's necessary for salvation.' 'And how do I know that yours is any better?' says the Reader, 'when you won't produce it. Wouldn't it be a hard case,' says he, 'to tell a poor man to throw away his old coat unless you gave him another? and isn't it hard to expect me to throw away my Rule of Faith until you give me a better?' 'But,' says Andy, 'before the time of Moses the Bible wasn't the rule, seeing that 'twasn't written.' 'But,' says the Reader, 'is that any reason that it shouldn't be the rule now that it is written? You might as well say that because people didn't travel by rail in Moses' time, we shouldn't do it now.' 'But,' says Andy, 'Adam and Eve didn't use the Bible as their rule.' 'But 'twasn't Adam and Eve's rule we want,' says the Reader, 'but *your* rule; and with that he turned to the boys, and says he, 'what use is it to tell us that you have a rule if you can't produce it? Tell me,' says he, 'what would you say if two men differed about which of their horses was the best, and one of them said, 'Bring out the two horses and let us try them both; but the other wouldn't produce his horse at all, though he held out stiffly that 'twas the best?' 'Troth,' says Jerry, 'I'd either think that he hadn't the horse at all, or that he thought him no great shakes.' 'Well,' says the Reader, 'that's

² This scene took place a few months since at a public discussion.